

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

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FOL RPT MOSCOW 1515 ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN CAIRO DAMASCUS
DAKAR JIDDA LENINGRAD LONDON MADRID NOUAKCHOTT PARIS RABAT
TRIPOLI TUNIS USUN NY 2 FEB QUOTE

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DEPT PASS ALGIERS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PFOR, UR, US, SS, AG MO
SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS ON SAHARA DISPUTE

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS CONTINUES TO LEAN
TOWARD ALGIERS IN ITS COVERAGE OF THE SAHARAN DISPUTE,
AND FOR FIRST TIME IMPLIES U.S. IS ON SIDE OF MOROCCO.
END SUMMARY.

2. IN LIGHT COVERAGE, SOVIET CENTRAL PRESS MAINTAINS
ITS TILT TOWARD ALGIERS AND THE POLISARIO FRONT. PRAVDA
(FEB 1) CARRIES EXCERPTS FROM AN ALGERIAN ANNOUNCEMENT
THAT THE SITUATION HAS A "DANGEROUS CHARACTER," AND
THAT THE POLISARIO FRONT WILL CONTINUE ITS "STRUGGLE FOR THE
INDEPENDENCE OF THE WESTERN SAHARA." ACCORDING TO PRAVDA, POLISARIO
FORCES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE INVOLVED IN BATTLES WITH MOROCCAN
AND MAURITANIAN TROOPS.

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3. PRAVDA ALSO REPORTS FROM RABAT THAT HASSAN'S SPECIAL EMISSARY, FORMER PRIME MINISTER LAMRAMI, JOURNEYED TO WASHINGTON "BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SITUATION." PRAVDA ADDS FROM WASHINGTON THAT LAMRANI MET WITH THE SECRETARY, AFTER WHICH THE STATE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S. "INTENDS TO EXTEND MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE" TO MOROCCO.

4. ELSEWHERE, IN ITS AUTHORITATIVE INTERNATIONAL WEEK, PRAVDA DEVOTES ONLY ONE PARAGRAPH TO THE DISPUTE, BUT CITES PASSAGE FROM BOUTEFELIKI'S MESSAGE TO WALDHEIM THAT THE SITUATION "IS BECOMING DANGEROUS FOR PEACE."

5. COMMENT. PRESS COVERAGE REMAINS EXTREMELY GUARDED, BUT LEANS TOWARD ALGIERS AND POLISARIO. THE REPORT ON LAMRANI'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON IS THE FIRST WE HAVE SEEN WHICH PLACES THE U.S. ON THE MOROCCAN SIDE OF THE DISPUTE. STOESSEL UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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